

As we have remarked upon a previous occasion, the Bible of all books, is the most faithful record of the secret workings of the mind and heart of man. It is emphatically the philosophy of the human heart, illustrated by beautiful and striking examples. Indeed there is no feeling, passion or emotion, which does not find its portrait drawn to the life in the sacred scriptures - sketched, too, by the pencil of an unerring hand. And, yet, with this fact before us, we are compelled to make the humiliating confession that our minds and hearts are too frequently led captive by human authors, while the Bible, the best of books, with a style so beautiful and filled with precepts so instructive, remains entirely neglected, or is read and studied with culpable indifference.

Would that I possessed the persuasive art, that I might influence the minds of those, here, who are just beginning to cultivate a taste for reading; and lead them to reflect upon the importance and advantages of gleaning their first knowledge from these sacred pages. You may read novels and literature of a light and trifling character till you are converted from the image of God, your master, and transformed into pitifully sentimentalists without either head or heart. You may <sup>neglect the Bible and</sup> read profane history and learn all that it tells of the crimes - the dark thoughts and bloody deeds of men and nations; and what have you gained? Your heart, naturally sensitive and sympathetic is converted into stone - You view mankind through their vices only - you doubt your neighbors and trust no one and thus you are led to pass your pilgrimage on earth with all the feelings of an Ishmael sailing in your bosom. ~~And~~ fine, you may neglect the Bible, and make your minds the repositories of all that is beautiful and useful in literature or science



or, you may treasure up the brightest gems of human knowledge  
and at last you will pass through life without tasting any  
of life's sweetest joys, and - die - and, in eternity bewail  
your blindness and excessive folly. But remember thy  
creator in the days of thy youth! - read his word and meditate  
upon his counsels while young - Study first the Bible - it will  
do you good - it will give strength to your understandings,  
wisdom to your minds -